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Pledge turns into reality

A SIX-YEAR project to install £90,000 worth of flower beds in old Grimsbury came to a successful end at the weekend.

Banbury Town Council member Ann Bonner, pictured with volunteers, unveiled the shrubs, bulbs and seedlings in Centre Street and East Street on Saturday.

The councillor made a pledge to get the flower beds when she was elected in 2006. She eventually won the funding from the town council, Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council.

Mrs Bonner said: "It's taken a long time to get the money for this and to get the planters designed, manufactured, and put in position. But we've got there in the end.

"The old planters were in a terrible condition and made this part of Banbury look untidy."



A TEST FOR HOPEFULS

By Oliver Evans

CHILDREN who want to attend Banbury Academy will have to take a literacy test under plans that would safeguard places for less-able students.

The academy, formerly known as Banbury School, wants to change its admissions policy if the school faces an overload of applications. This is because there are a set number of places allocated to three bands based on abilities.

Executive principal Dr Fiona Hammans said this move would ensure the academy remained "fully comprehensive", so it could cater for all pupils and help teachers prepare for their new students.

It also wants to give priority to those who attend the town's Dashwood and Harriers academy primaries.

There are currently more

Academy to introduce new admission exam

places than children at Banbury Academy – but demand is expected to grow in coming years.

A teachers' union spokesman, however, warned the "selection" policy would put stress on parents and reduce choice.

But Dr Hammans said: "It is not selection by any way. It is to get a completely comprehensive set of youngsters - not a skewed result."

Plans for 1,070 homes at Bankside, Oxford Road, would "dramatically change" its intake to the more "socio-economic advantaged", she said.

Dr Hammans added: "If you look at any popular school, then the sharp-elbowed middle classes will find their way into the

school they want." And the school was expecting a "big scramble" for places within three years.

"We want to make sure that we maintain a comprehensive structure and the first way to do that is to have literacy testing," she said.

"We would like to have youngsters right across the ability range."

Children in the care of the local authority and those with siblings already at the school would be prioritised.

Harriers and Dashwood pupils would be next in line, followed by other town schools, those living closest and children of some staff.

These policies echo those of the Aspirations Academies Trust, which

■ Continued Page 2



Banbury Academy's principal
Fiona Hammans



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InBRIEF

New hours for team

■ **CHERWELL District Council's** customer services team will open an hour later on Wednesdays under new plans. The team will take queries from 9.45am, instead of 8.45am, under changes backed by its executive. Its Bodicote office currently opens at 10am on Wednesday. A council report said this was needed so teams could have a weekly meeting with South Northamptonshire Council, with which Cherwell shares some services.

Members plea

■ **ADDERBURY Bowls Club** is seeking new members. It says it needs new players to meet a growing fixture list. An open day will be held at its Oxford Road base from 2.30pm to 5pm on Saturday, April 20. For information call Ted Eley on 01295 810653.

NHS contract

■ **A PRIVATE hospital** has begun to take appointments for 16- to 18-year-old orthopaedic patients through the NHS. The Horton NHS Treatment Centre, next to the general hospital, has provided orthopaedic work since 2006 for adult NHS patients. Now has a new NHS contract to treat teenagers.

Academy to launch new literacy tests for new admissions

■ From Page 1

Banbury Academy belongs to.

The school swapped to an academy last September and can now make such changes because of powers given to academy schools.

National Union of Teachers

spokesman Ed Finch said SAT tests already caused "great stress" for Year Six pupils. He said: "Further testing by the academy for selection purposes looks like the thin end of a very dangerous wedge." All primary pupils, and not just AAT schools, should have an equal

chance of a place, he added.

It comes after the school announced a bid for Government cash to convert its Broughton Building into a "studio space" school for about 300 14- to 18-year-olds who would specialise in English and Maths. It has also made a bid to open a

free school in a former caretakers' home for up to 50 pupils who "struggle" to study in a mainstream setting.

For information on the admissions consultation visit aatbanbury.org. Responses are invited by February 14 at office@aatbanbury.org.

Lorry wish comes true for Heather

By Oliver Evans

BRAVE Heather Hiorns' wish came true when a charity treated her to a visit to legendary trucking company Eddie Stobart.

The Starlight Children's Foundation arranged for the ten-year-old Orchard Field Community School pupil to visit the firm last month.

There she met Stobart Group chief operating officer William Stobart, son of the company's famous namesake.

The firm has become a household name as parents challenge their children to spot its lorries – which carry girls' names – on long journeys.

Heather, of Cromwell Road,

■ Starlight Foundation arranges for special visit to see Stobart depot

Bretch Hill, has learning difficulties and cerebral palsy.

Mum Alison Hiorns put her forward to the foundation, which arranged the visit and paid for a taxi to the depot in Crick, Northamptonshire.

Mrs Hiorns said: "She had a wonderful time. She is still talking about it."

"It started off when we started going to hospital."

"She would get bored on the journey and we played a game looking out for passing Stobart lorries."

The looming visit to see the trucks "kept her going" during three weeks at Oxford's Children's Hospital in September when she had an operation on her legs, she said.

The youngster was determined to get through her physio so she could walk for

her trip to the firm, Mrs Hiorns said.

And the thrilled youngster was told during her visit that one of the trucks in its new fleet would be named after her.

Mrs Hiorns said: "She was thrilled."

Foundation spokesman Henry Vere Nicoll said: "A Starlight wish gives a seriously-ill child something wonderful to focus on. It helps to take their mind off their illness and treatment."

"We are delighted to have been able to grant Heather's wish and are grateful to William Stobart and his team for helping to make Heather's dream come true."

Her 17-year-old sister, Kate, plans to take part in the Banbury Run on March 24, to raise cash for the charity.



Heather Hiorns meets one of the drivers and his lorry

Council's concern over HS2 compensation

COMPENSATION offers for homes affected by plans for a high-speed railway line through Oxfordshire have been criticised by council bosses.

Cherwell District Council is to raise a series of concerns over the High Speed 2 project.

The line will connect London to Birmingham and later the north, passing through North-

east Oxfordshire, by villages like Fimmere and Mixbury.

Already, the council has joined other local authorities in issuing a High Court challenge, on which a judgement is expected this month.

Among a list of worries, the council said a bid to let the Government refuse to buy a blighted home if only part

needed to be knocked down was "unacceptable". It said: "A property that was so close to the proposed scheme that it required part of it to be demolished, must be purchased."

It also opposed a plan to set a fixed zone, in which property owners could bid to sell their homes to the Government.

It said: "There would likely be those very close to the line that will feel little or no effect and others at a great distance, which could suffer adverse visual intrusion or the effects of sound or vibration on their property."

The Department for Transport had yet to comment at the time of going to press.

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■ Court told how charity competitor innocently took 'supplement'

Coroner's warning after marathon runner's death

A YOUNG charity runner, who died near the finishing line of the London Marathon, was using a stimulant which has since been banned, an inquest heard last week.

Claire Squires, a 30-year-old hairdresser, collapsed on April 22 last year, having suffered cardiac failure, an inquest at Southwark Coroner's Court heard.

Miss Squires was running the marathon in aid of the Banbury branch of the Samaritans, where her mother, Cilla, is a volunteer. She had aimed to raise £500 for the charity, but when the news of her death hit national headlines, the total jumped to more than £1m.

It is yet to be revealed precisely how much money the branch will get. However, the Claire Squires Fund – which was set up after the tragedy – said it would support the branch for at least the next decade.

Currently the branch receives about £30,000 a year, which has allowed the Banbury branch to undergo a refurbishment of its training facilities for new members, and set up the Claire Squires Award, to be presented to volunteers once they have reached 24 years of service.

But at last week's inquest into

By Banbury reporter

Miss Squires' death, the coroner heard that Miss Squires had bought the supplement Jack3D online, but did not realise it contained 1,3-dimethylamine, which increases heart rate.

Boyfriend Simon van Herewege told the hearing that Miss Squires had put a scoop in her water bottle for "a boost" if she needed it during her charity run.

Outside court he read a statement on behalf of the Squires family.

He said: "Claire would never ever have taken anything that would cause her harm, or even worse risk her life.

"She innocently took a supplement which at the time was entirely legal and widely available on the high street and, somewhat worryingly, was apparently used by so many others

"It is clear that there needs to be far better supervision of the so-called health foods and supplements industry, so that no more tragedies like this happen again.

"Claire was a beautiful person, committed to helping others. We have been comforted by all those who knew and

loved Claire and by the support shown by the general public through donations to the Samaritans and subsequent charitable events to raise money for worthwhile causes in her name.

"The overwhelming response will help Claire's memory live on and hopefully help others."

Coroner Dr Philip Barlow

said: "My hope is that the coverage of this case and the events leading up to Claire's death will help publicise the potentially harmful effects of DMAA during extreme exertion."

In a narrative verdict he ruled: "She had taken a supplement containing DMAA, which on the balance of probabilities in combination with extreme physical exertion, caused acute cardiac failure which resulted in her death."

The coroner said Miss Squires regularly took the drug, which was not illegal to buy, possess or use, even though the court heard that it is now banned by the US Army and for elite athletes.

Samaritans director Paul Gardiner said: "The Claire Squires Fund has allocated money to support our branch in recognition of Cilla, Claire's



VICTIM:
London
Marathon
runner
Claire
Squires

mother, being a volunteer with us. This will help us to continue our valuable service in the community and always remember Claire."

Commissioner's budget means rise in council tax

TWO RESIDENTS in Oxfordshire will face a two per cent increase in their council tax bills after a rise in Thames Valley Police's portion was approved.

The budget compiled by Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld

will mean the public will have to pay £3.08 a year extra for a Band D household.

The increase seeks to allow police to recruit an extra nine officers and redeploy 34 other officers to roles in

local policing and child protection.

The force is also having to save £70m over a six-year period between 2011/12 and 2016/17 due to Government cuts.

Cash savings of £13.5m have already been identified for 2013/14.

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InBRIEF

Charity cash

■ **SHOPPERS** donated £823 for the youth homeless charity BYHP. They gave cash at a dancing teddy bear toy demonstration at Castle Quay Shopping Centre, Banbury, over Christmas. Handing over the cheque, the centre's commercial manager, Paul Jackson, said: "We are delighted that our dancing bears were able to reach such an incredible total and would like to thank all of our shoppers for their kind donations." Anna Day, chief executive of the Banbury charity, said: "This news is tremendous and the money will go far in supporting our young people."

Ear for teens

■ A NEW council body will gather feedback from young people about services and activities in the county. Oxfordshire County Council's Young People's Well-being Group will collate comments from young people, both online and in person. The group will meet twice a year and their findings will be fed back to the Children and Young People's Board. Education chief Melinda Tilley said: "It's essential that the opinions and ideas of young people are taken into account and documented regarding services provided for them."

Dogs for Disabled charity in the running for a top award

A PROJECT that helps autistic children by working with dogs has been shortlisted for an annual award.

Dogs for the Disabled is nominated in the Innovative Family Support

category in The National Autistic Society's Autism Professionals Awards.

It says its Parents Autism Workshops and Support (PAWS) programme allows dogs to have an "incredible calming

effect" on anxious or distressed children.

It was nominated for the March 5 Harrogate event by Sarah Evans, whose son, Christian, took part in the project.

She said: "He is much more sociable and willing to go out, his sleeping routine has improved and he now shows more affection towards me, his dad and others."

Planners back plea for mosque

THE man behind a planned mosque in Chipping Norton said he was "on top of the world" after the scheme was approved.

West Oxfordshire District Council's uplands area planning sub-committee approved the planning application on Monday.

The scheme will see a former shop in Hitchmans Mews, off West Street, changed into a mosque.

Applicant Tahirul Hasan, 46, said: "I am on top of the world. I am very busy telling everyone.

"The community is very happy and very pleased about this."

By Tom Jennings

Mr Hasan, who is a town councillor, said the muslim community would meet tomorrow to discuss when to move into their new home.

Asked about opposition to the application, he added: "Now is the time to forget everything. This is what Islam says."

Chipping Norton Town Council, along with 28 residents, objected and had raised concerns about additional noise and parking, and the loss of retail space.

Residents' comments were

edited by district council planning officers. Agenda documents said: "Some representations have not been included within this report due to their prejudiced nature."

Chipping Norton's muslim community, which the 2011 Census said was 34-strong out of a population of 6,337, currently meets in the town hall on Fridays.

The new mosque will open for ten-minute prayer sessions between sunrise and one hour after sunset five times a day, Mr Hasan said.

Mr Hasan said he did not plan to hold religious teaching sessions.



ABOVE: An overjoyed Tahirul Hasan. BELOW: The former Chipping Norton shop which is to become a mosque



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New leader for group

SEAN Woodcock, pictured, has been elected as the new leader of the Labour group on Cherwell District Council.

He replaced Patrick Cartledge – who has stepped down for personal reasons – on the Conservative-run council.

Mr Woodcock, a member for Banbury Ruscote, said: "I am proud

to accept this appointment and will continue Patrick's work in building a strong Labour Party presence in the council to serve the whole Cherwell community".

Mr Cartledge, who also represents Ruscote, said: "I am confident Sean will make an excellent leader for the Labour party group."



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Photographer facing prison threat

A NEWSPAPER photographer is facing jail after taking pictures of jury members outside Oxford Crown Court.

Lucy Ford, of Smith Street, Warwick, was working for the *Banbury Guardian* when she is alleged to have fallen foul of contempt of court laws which ban photographing jurors.

The court heard she took pictures of two jury members on Tuesday, January 28, and asked them to identify a photo of a defendant on trial for child sex abuse offences.

Judge Ian Pringle said he had been told the 34-year-old quickly

By Joe Nimmo

realised her mistake, telling the jurors – “Sorry, I’m not supposed to talk to you”.

She then apologised to a member of the court’s security staff.

But Judge Pringle said he was taking the matter seriously because it could have led to the case being abandoned.

He said: “The concern that I had is that if it is right that she took a photograph of jurors leaving this court, that in itself can intimidate those individuals.

“It is only by good fortune that both of them were happy to continue.

“The trial could have been abandoned and we could have had a retrial with a repeat of children giving evidence.”

But Kate Wilson, defending, said the jury members had simply walked past as the photograph was being taken.

She said: “She is potentially facing a custodial sentence.

“These jurors walked into her picture. It was in no way an attempt to intimidate a juror.”

The case was adjourned but is due to continue today.



The exterior of Oxford Crown Court

InBRIEF

Strategy backed

■ A DRAFT plan of Oxfordshire County Council’s objectives over the next four years has been approved. Members of the cabinet approved the Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 last Tuesday. It highlights priorities, such as delivering a savings target of £77m from 2013 to 2017, and how the authority will challenge itself to improve its technology and work practices. The 36-page document will go before the full council for approval on February 19 ahead of a likely official publication in March.

How to turn snow into money

WHEN the snow fell last month, it got Patsy Bignell thinking about how she could raise cash for charity.

So she challenged all her friends on social networking site Facebook to build a snowman and send the picture to her.

For each photograph she pledged to donate £1 to the Adderbury-based Kitharine House Hospice.

Her neighbour, Gary Biggs, whose father-in-law, Derek Key, was cared for by the hospice, said he would match what Mrs Bignell raised.

And after 33 photographs and private donations, the snowman photographs raised £237.

Mother-of-two Mrs Bignell, 44, of Powys Grove, Banbury, said: “I thought first of all it would be good for parents to get out with their children and build snowmen.

Then I asked all my friends to upload their photos and I would personally donate £1 for each one.

“It was something easy and the material were there for people to use. It got them out and creating stuff and got the community together.”



Patsy Bignell, of Banbury, and left the snowman that she made

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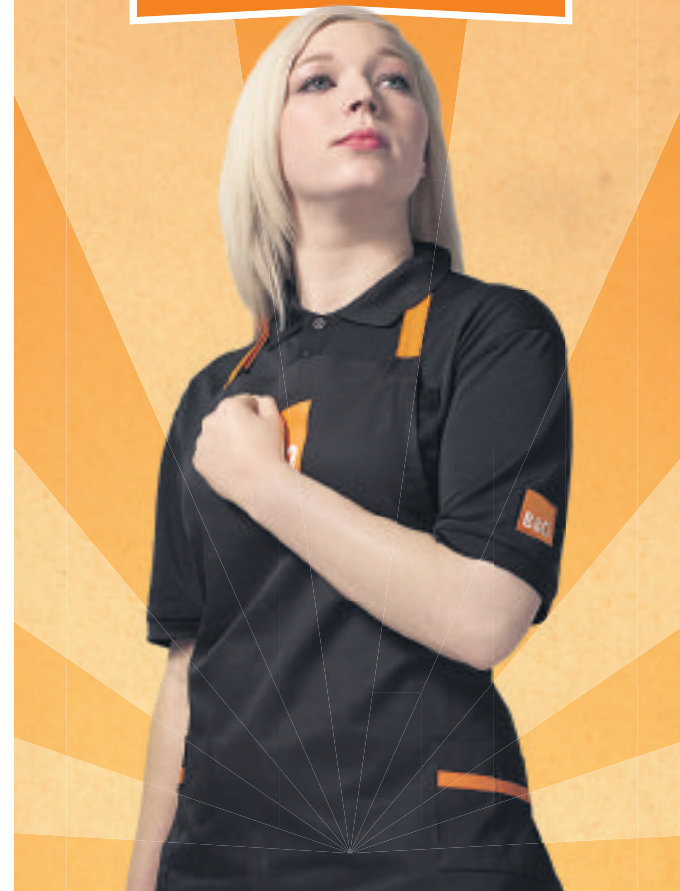
A FREE parking offer over the Christmas period drew a “substantial” number of visitors to Banbury and Bicester, Cherwell District Council has revealed.

The council offered free parking in most of its car parks on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays from December 1 to January 7.

Deputy leader George Reynolds said: “Evidence suggests that the scheme drew a substantial amount of visitors to the two towns and benefited both shoppers and traders.”

But he said the move – which was mostly funded by the Government – lost it about £100,000 in takings and there was “no guarantee” of cash help from ministers.

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Births still suspended

HEALTH bosses were unable to say when pregnant women will be able to give birth at Chipping Norton's maternity unit again.

The birth facilities at the Cotswold Maternity Unit were "temporarily" shut more than three months ago after concerns about working practices were raised by staff and mothers.

A review was then launched to look at why a high number of women from the area were choosing to have their births elsewhere, and the transfer rate to other hospitals.

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust said in October that the review would take about three months, but this week it said the document was still not finished.

The trust said the review's recommendations would then need to be considered by its board in March before a decision is finally made.

Hilary Biles, Oxfordshire County Council member for Chipping Norton, said it was disgraceful the review had still not been completed.

She said: "How long does it take to do a review of staff management? It should not even take 12 weeks.

By Tom Jennings

"There are mothers that are up in the air about where they are going to give birth, and that is unacceptable. It should be open now."

Mrs Biles said the maternity unit had been a new and state-of-the-art facility when it was opened by Prime Minister David Cameron in May 2011.

She added that the public needed to know the reasons for the closure and has called for an independent inquiry into the suspension of births.

She said: "If it was a management issue, which is what they are saying, they are

asking the same staff to work on this review that were involved in the management.

"I don't think that is right and it needs to be more transparent."

Jane Hervé, head of midwifery for Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "We have very nearly completed our evidence collection for the review and the report will then be

written. I will give an interim report on the review to the February meeting of Oxfordshire County Council's health overview and scrutiny committee.

"The report and recommendations following the review will be considered by the trust's board in

early March." She added: "We are committed to reopening the Cotswold Maternity Unit as soon as we are able to, but are not able to say yet exactly what date that will be."

A petition launched last year claims two midwives were suspended from the maternity unit after they raised

concerns about working practices and safety. The petition calls for them to be reinstated. The trust will not confirm these claims.

Between April 2012 and the suspension of births in October, 33 babies were born at the maternity unit.

Review delay keeps maternity unit shut



County councillor Hilary Biles outside Chipping Norton Hospital's maternity unit

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Smokers are urged to make homes smoke-free

SMOKERS are being encouraged to protect others by taking their habit outdoors.

It is hoped the Oxfordshire Smoking Advice Service campaign will encourage residents to turn their homes and cars into smoke-free zones.

The campaign will be launched in Banbury tomorrow at the East Street Children's Centre, from 10am to 1pm.

Sue Bolton, from the Oxfordshire Smoking Advice Service, said: "This campaign is aimed at people who aren't yet ready to give up smoking but want to make a big difference to the health of those around them.

"By taking your smoking outside, you can improve the health of your family and friends — even your pets. We encourage people to sign up to the pledge and make their homes and cars smoke-free."

Those who sign up to the new campaign will receive pledge packs, containing facts, tools and tips to help smokers take their first steps to quitting, as well as follow-up phone calls to provide support.

Leaflets will be distributed in GP surgeries, children's centres and other areas in and around Banbury.

● For further information visit oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk

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■ Father claims that better knowledge could have helped daughter

Joint call to help county teens suffering from ME

PATIENTS and doctors in Oxfordshire have called for new specialist services to help young people suffering from ME.

Oxfordshire ME Group for Action, known as Omega, claims the county's lack of help has forced more than 300 children to "put their futures on hold".

Research carried out by the group, with the help of the Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network (LiNK), found that more than two thirds of GPs did not think services were good enough.

Omega says the doctors would also support a "multidisciplinary team" to help youngsters cope with the chronic fatigue syndrome.

At present the Oxfordshire Community ME Team is only able to treat children who are 14 and above.

Mark Ellis, of Elton Road, Banbury, has tried to find help

By Joe Nimmo

for his 18-year-old daughter, Sophie, who has suffered from the condition for the last nine years.

She has been in the John Radcliffe Hospital for the last three months and her father said

that even watching the TV or talking on the phone could leave her exhausted.

He said: "When Sophie fell ill, although supportive, our GP simply did not have the knowledge or understanding of the illness to recognise it."

"Because it took six years for her to receive a confirmed

diagnosis of ME, her doctors didn't know how to treat her and her condition became increasingly worse.

"For the past three years she has been severely affected and has been in hospital for a total of seven months in the last year – being fed by tube to keep her alive.

"If ME had been diagnosed when she first became ill, following a gastric virus, and we had received good advice, there is no doubt that she would not have become so severely ill.

"Better education for GPs and a community service for children like Sophie are vital to prevent this happening to another child."

Omega member Patricia Wells said: "Our GPs are under great pressure and we are grateful to those who filled in our survey.

"We are pleased that they recognise this horrible illness as a clinical entity. Many GPs are helpful to patients with ME.

"They say they need better information and this is confirmed by our members who experience different levels of knowledge and understanding.

"Changes are needed to improve services for children and adults to enable them to receive the medical support that they need."



Mark Ellis, who has been searching for help for his 18-year-old daughter, Sophie

Banbury Cake

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Community groups urged to apply for cash

It's time for the great giveaway

COMIC Relief is gearing up to spread cheer with a £50,000 grant giveaway to community groups across the county.

The Red Nose Day Community Cash grant is being offered to 50 small organisations, making big impacts on the lives of people in Oxfordshire.

The project, run by Comic Relief, will see between £500 to £1,000 given to small community groups.

Sue Wicks, the UK grant manager for Comic Relief, said: "Comic Relief is delighted to be offering Red Nose Day Community Cash once again to local groups in Oxfordshire.

"We've funded some truly inspiring projects in previous years.

"We know from our long experience of grant-making in communities all over the UK that local groups can make a huge impact at the heart of their communities with a small amount of money.

"Thanks to these groups, money raised through Red Nose Day can make a real difference where it's needed most.

"I urge as many groups as possible to get their applications in now for their

By Katriona Ormiston

chance to get a grant from the £50,000 on offer."

The announcement marks the countdown of Comic Relief's Red Nose Day 2013 on March 15.

Applications for a share of the funds close ahead of Red Nose Day on March 8.

A three-person panel, run by the Oxfordshire Community Fund, will

decide which projects the money will be given to.

Chief executive Jayne Woodley said: "It is for all groups across Oxfordshire and it is always good to get local people together.

"It is always nice to just go to Africa and abroad but makes a big difference here too."

To apply for a grant go to oxfordshire.org/cp6.php before March 8.



Who is eligible to apply for a £500 to £1,000 share?

THE grants are available to community organisations, registered charities, social enterprises, co-operatives, faith organisations and community interest companies.

Groups which have been established for less than 12 months are eligible to apply.

Groups eligible to apply for

Red Nose Day Community Cash grants need to:

- Be working in a disadvantaged or deprived area

- Be small local groups with an income of less than £100,000 run by local people

- Have limited access to other sources of income

Examples of the type of activities which can be funded:

- Parent and toddler groups
- Dad and lads group
- Equipment and material for sport groups
- Community festivals
- Cross generational work
- Sport tournaments/competition costs
- Lunch clubs
- Running costs for self-help groups
- Committee and volunteer/staff training
- Hire of sports facilities

The closing date for

applications is March 8, 2013.

Successful applicants will be contacted by the end of April.

Grants will not be awarded to the following:

- To individuals
- To statutory organisations including PCTs and schools
- Groups who are not constituted

Grants will not be awarded for the following purposes:

- To fund trips abroad
- To fund buses, minibuses or other community transport schemes (not including transport costs forming part of a project)
- To fund building costs, including access adaptations to buildings
- Groups already in receipt of any Comic Relief funding (not including the last Red Nose Day Community Cash grants)

The Red Nose Day Community Cash grant scheme is being run in conjunction with Oxford Community Foundation, Comic Relief and the Oxford Mail.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your project before making an application, please contact the Oxfordshire Community Foundation on 01865 798666 or email jubilee@oxfordshire.org



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Cabinet backs plan for increases

Day centre fees may rise 258%

CONTROVERSIAL day-centre charges look set to be increased by 258 per cent after councillors backed the plans.

Oxfordshire County Council's ruling cabinet agreed the proposals last week.

The cost of attending day centres will rise from £4.18 to £15 from September.

And the fee for transport to the centres will go up by 82p to £5 for a return journey, a rise of 16.4 per cent.

Liberal Democrat councillor Jenny Hannaby raised concerns that some elderly people could lose an important lifeline.

The county councillor said: "I believe that a lot of people will stop using the day centres and the viability of them will be hit."

Speaking after the meeting, she reiterated her worry.

She said: "There will be a group of people

By Mark Taylor

who drop out. So, in two or three years time, it could lead to a review over the viability of some centres – which could then close."

Cabinet member for adult services, Arash Fatemian, defended the plans and said there was "misinformation" floating about.

He said: "We value day centres as an important part of the community."

Mr Fatemian added the aim was to increase the quality and keep the day centres viable.

And he said the charges would be introduced gradually over a phased two-year period from September 2013 as part of a commitment to keep the centres open.

The plans now need to be approved by full council.

InCOURT

Verdicts from magistrates courts around the county

● James Taylor, 23, of Oxford Road, Banbury, admitted possession of cannabis in Calthorpe Road, Banbury, on August 14. Fined £100, £15 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

● Sean Williams, 32, of McKeevor Place, Banbury, admitted possession of cannabis in Dorcas Road, Banbury, on September 25. Fined £200, £15 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

● Anthony Baugh, 26, of Edinburgh Close, Banbury, admitted criminal damage worth £172.80 to a glass window belonging to Fellside Estates in Banbury on September 18. Given a 12-month conditional discharge. Told to pay £172.80 compensation and £30 costs.

● Christopher Read, 18, of Weeping Cross, Bodicote, admitted using threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress, in Banbury on October 5. Handed a 12-month conditional discharge and told to pay £85 costs.

● Daniel Spindler, 22, of Deacon Way, Banbury, admitted possession of cannabis in Banbury on September 5. Fined £155, £15 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

● Christopher Jeffery, 20, of

Hannis Road, Chipping Norton, admitted possession of cannabis in Chipping Norton on December 8. Given a nine-month conditional discharge, told to pay a £15 victims' surcharge and £85 costs.

● Martin Potter, 29, of Lambs Crescent, Banbury, admitted assault by beating in High Street, Banbury, on June 16. Sent to prison for 28 days.

● Alan Burtonwood, 47, of Prospect Road, Banbury, admitted making 117 indecent images of children between July 23, 2006, and October 22, 2011, at Middle Barton. Also admitted making 112 indecent images of children on October 23, 2011, at Middle Barton. Community order made with a supervision requirement. Told to pay £85 costs. Sexual offence prevention order also made.

● Karen Highton, 46, of Delapre Drive, Banbury, admitted shoplifting toiletries and a dog chew worth £7.68 from Wilkinson in Banbury on December 11. Fined £73 and a £20 victims' surcharge.

● Leigh Lester, 39, of Causeway, Banbury, admitted shoplifting four aftershave bottles worth £144.80 from Debenhams in Banbury on December 12. Fined £150, a £15 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

● Ben Thompson, 25, of Rye Close, Banbury, admitted assault by beating in High Street, Banbury, on December 14. Sent to prison for 28 days.

● Joseph Hammond, 24, of Dunstan Avenue, Chipping Norton, admitted drink-driving on the A44 in Enstone on August 3. Had 157mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood, above the legal limit of 80mg. Fined £205, a £21 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

● Hayley Alderman, 31, of Guernsey Way, Banbury, was convicted in her absence of using a colour television in her home without a licence on July 16, 2012. She was fined £200, told to pay a victim surcharge of £15 and ordered to pay costs of £90 to Capita Business Services Ltd.

● Andrew Hodge, 44, of Bo Peep Farm, Aynho Road, Adderbury, admitted assault by beating in Adderbury on December 16 last year. Conditionally discharged for six months and told to pay a victim surcharge of £15 and £50 costs.

● Kevin Kewin, 38, of Meadow View, Banbury, admitted possessing cocaine, a Class-A drug, at Banbury Police Station, in Warwick Road, on December 13 last year. Fined £150 and told to pay a victim surcharge of £20 and £40 costs.

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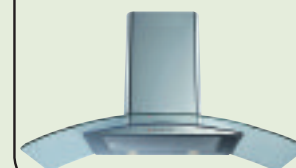


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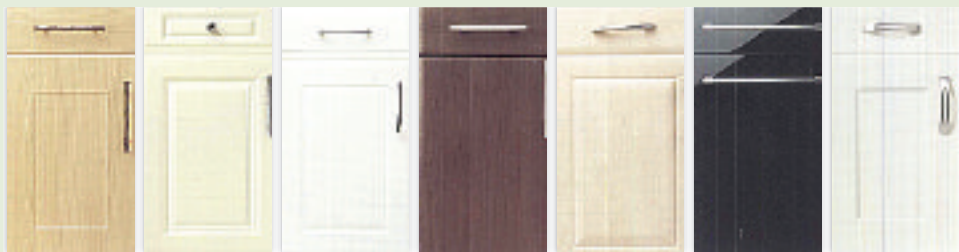
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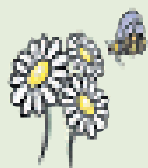
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Oxfordshire version of an 'Oyster' could be valid on both buses and trains

Leader's vision of a county travel card



A TRAVEL card that could be used by bus and rail passengers across Oxfordshire is being proposed by Oxfordshire County Council leader Ian Hudspeth.

He wants to create a plastic smartcard similar to the Oyster card in London, which can be used on buses, rail services, and to pay for car parking.

The "Oyster card for Oxfordshire" does not yet have the backing of the council's cabinet, and Mr Hudspeth wants to consult passenger groups before costing the idea and taking it forward.

The proposal follows the success of the Key smartcard introduced by Oxford Bus Company in 2010. Rival bus firm Stagecoach operates a similar smartcard.

Eighteen months ago a joint ticketing arrangement was introduced so that Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach passengers could use both

By Andrew Ffrench

companies' services in and around Oxford, using a SmartZone option on the smartcards.

Mr Hudspeth said: "The card would be similar to the Oyster card in London, and could be used on different forms of transport across Oxfordshire, to make it seamless and easier for people to travel.

"At first the card could be designed for just bus passengers, but eventually I would like to extend it so that rail passengers could use it as well.

"This is at an early stage, but it's an idea I want to explore with all travel operators and passenger groups to see what they think.

"The card could be used to pay for park-and-ride car parking charges, and for bus and train tickets.

"I want to investigate how far this could go, using smartphone

technology, and perhaps a special Oxfordshire travel app could also be created.

"For example, I would like someone to be able to park and ride at Water Eaton and then get the train from Oxford to London, using just the one card."

Philip Kirk, managing director of Oxford Bus Company, said: "We realise that the success of our groundbreaking Key has made everyone aware of the advantages of a smartcard in speeding up journey time and making bus travel more flexible.

"We are happy to discuss the possibilities and investigate how

we can harness the ever-changing technology." Mr Hudspeth said he would set up a working group to examine the proposal if he was still council leader after the May election, and that a card could take up to 18 months to launch.

Hugh Jaeger, local spokesman for Bus Users UK, said: "I met Mr Hudspeth to discuss this.

"There are bus passengers in outlying areas who want to take advantage of joint ticketing but can't at the moment. They would certainly welcome a smartcard for bus travel for the whole of Oxfordshire.

"The technology is there, so there's no reason why this shouldn't be investigated."

Bruce Williamson, a spokesman for rail campaign group Railfuture, added: "A card like this would provide more flexibility for rail passengers, but I think you still need to keep the option of paying cash."

Ticket barriers at Oxfordshire stations have not yet been adapted for smartcard use.



The Oyster card, used in London

Council leader Ian Hudspeth, who wants to launch an Oxfordshire-wide travel card

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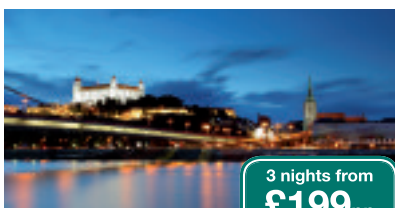
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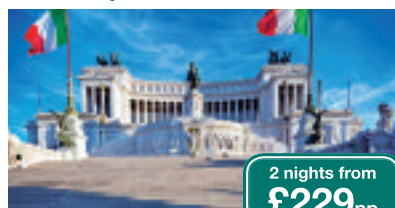
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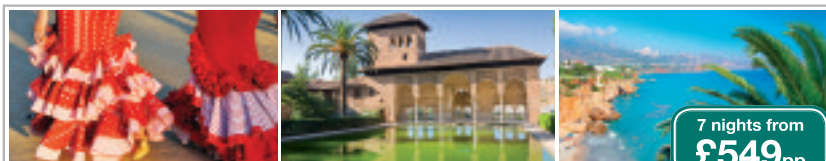
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Departures until October 2013

Price includes

- Direct flights from Birmingham or Heathrow to Venice returning from Rome
- Airport taxes, hand & hold luggage
- 7 nights central 3★ hotels with breakfast (2 nights Venice, 2 nights Florence, 3 nights Rome)
- Rail travel between the cities

MP in warning after charity's prosecution

A SENIOR Tory MP has warned the RSPCA that it must face criticism if it is seen as a political prosecutor, after it secured a conviction against a hunt in North Oxfordshire.

Former Solicitor General Sir Edward Garnier said the RSCPA faced a "public perception it has become a political prosecutor".

Two members of the Heythrop Hunt – Julian Barnfield, 49, and Richard Sumner, 68 – pleaded guilty to hunting foxes illegally at Oxford Magistrates' Court in December.

The Hunt itself also admitted to the charges. The RSPCA brought the case as a private

prosecution, which cost £250,000 and was its first under the terms of the Hunting Act.

Speaking in a Westminster Hall debate, Sir Edward said: "We need to be very careful the prosecuting system does not allow itself to become an arm of any one or any number of political campaigns."

Barnfield, of Worcester Road, Chipping Norton, was fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £2,000 costs and Sumner, of Salperton, Gloucestershire, was fined £1,800 and ordered to pay £2,500 costs.

The Hunt was fined £4,000 and told to pay costs of £15,000.

■ One in five arrested between 6am and 6pm

Day-time tally of drink-drivers



Police carry out a roadside breathalyser test to a motorist stopped during the day

ABOUT one in five county drink-drive arrests take place between 6am and 6pm, new figures show.

Police said it is a stark warning about the dangers of driving "the morning after the night before".

The figures reveal that from November 2011 to October 2012, 111 out of 603 arrests – that is 18 per cent – were during the day.

A further 203 were between 6pm and midnight and 289 from midnight to 6am, figures released under the Freedom of Information Act show.

From December 1, 2011, to January 2, 2012, some 15 per cent of arrests (66 drivers) were recorded between 6am and 6pm.

By Oliver Evans

And 21 people were arrested in the county, from December 1 to 16.

Those found to be above the limit face a driving ban for at least a year, though this can be reduced by attending a course if offered.

Thames Valley Police road safety sergeant Chris Appleby said most people arrested between 6am and 6pm will be driving the next morning after a boozy night out.

He added: "They get three or four hours sleep, shower and breakfast but that isn't going to make you sober."

The force is currently running a "Smashed" campaign – to warn of

the legal and personal consequences of a drink-drive conviction.

Sgt Appleby said: "There is still a long way to go to get this menace off our roads. I think people are getting the message about drink-driving."

"Fewer people are doing it than they did 20, 30 years ago."

But he warned: "Ultimately, there is no safe amount of alcohol to have in your system if you are going to be driving. Leave it 24 hours."

"It is difficult to tell people that because of the way our culture is, but that is the only way."

Only exceptional cases, like medical emergencies, will see drivers who are found to be over the limit, escape a ban, he said.

Crime figures show a drop in violence

CRIME has fallen by 12 per cent across the Thames Valley, the latest figures show.

There were 19,317 fewer crime victims from October 2011 to September 2012 compared to the period the year before, the Office for National Statistics figures show. House burglaries fell by 16 per cent and robberies dropped by 18 per cent. And violence against the person crimes fell by 17 per cent and sex crimes by six per cent.

Oxfordshire-specific figures were not available.

Thames Valley Police Chief Constable Sara Thornton said: "These figures reflect the hard work and

dedication of all the officers and staff across Thames Valley Police.

"The reductions we have seen in violent crime is a testament to the work we do to police the night-time economies of our busy towns and cities and our commitment to maintaining a frontline presence."

The survey also showed 60 per cent of residents agreed the force was tackling local concerns.

Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld added: "We will be continuing in our efforts to reduce crime even further. This latest reduction is a strong foundation to build upon."

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LOCAL BUSINESS ACCELERATORS CAMPAIGN



■ **TOASTING SUCCESS:** Tony Harrison and Jo Dakin at their 10-acre orchard near Warmington

Picture: OX53991 Steve Wheeler

Three cheers to our top entrepreneurs

■ **Andrew Smith**
BUSINESS EDITOR
asmith@oxfordmail.co.uk

A COUPLE who set up a cider-making business are raising a glass to their success after being selected as one of the winners of the Local Business Accelerators competition.

Jo Dakin and Tony Harrison turned their backs on the corporate world to enjoy the good life running a 10-acre orchard near Warmington, just outside Banbury, and last year produced about 7,000 litres of cider including their Thorn Brook premium brand.

This year they are looking to step up production using more of their own fruit and will start selling through local branches of the Co-op, as well as pubs and festivals which proved a hit last year.

And to help them along they will receive three months' worth of free advertising in a Newsquest publication of their choice along with a year's support from a top business mentor.

Ms Dakin said: "The advertising will be useful as we look to launch Thorn Brook in the shops and the mentoring will be great as sometimes you feel as if you are working in a vacuum and you just want a sounding board to see whether you are going in the right direction."

"We have also talked about taking on an employee and starting to export but I have never done those



things before, so meeting someone with experience will be very useful."

The Little Orchard Company is one of three winners of the Local Business Accelerators competition run in the *Banbury Cake* and its sister titles.

Richard Ashton, who runs Abingdon-based WorldBeatsMusic, is also banging a drum for his business after being selected as a winner.

He formed his company after becoming disillusioned with the County Music Service where he had worked previously. Now he works with schools throughout the county running music classes and workshops and has found a ready demand for his services.

Mr Ashton said: "It is fantastic to be a winner. I am very surprised. Any help I can get will be amazing, especially as I am not very clued up on marketing and social media."

"If you had told me a few years ago that I would be running my own business, I would have laughed. But I have found a passion for it."

The third winner is Woodstock-based Next Generation Renewable Energy, run by Greg Bishop and Rob Stocks.

Mr Bishop, an electrician by trade, and plumber Mr Stocks decided to put their skills together to start their business in 2009. They initially offered solar panel installation but have now expanded to cover a wider range of green heating and



■ **WINNERS:** Richard Ashton, left, takes his WorldBeatsMusic business into Blewbury Primary School, while Greg Bishop and Rob Stocks contemplate three months' free advertising and advice at Next Generation Renewable Energy

Pictures: OX57131 Antony Moore & OX57129 Damian Halliwell

power alternatives, including solar thermal and photovoltaic installations and air source heat pumps.

Now the business is flourishing with high demand from home owners looking for cheaper alternatives to the soaring price of fossil fuels.

"I have always found advertising the business particularly difficult as I don't understand it," admitted Mr Bishop.

"So to have three months' free advertising and advice on what to do with it will be a great boost for the business. And the mentoring will give us ideas on how to progress the business and open a few doors. At the same time, while we want to expand we don't want to bite off more than we can chew."

'Standard of entries now even higher'

OUR BUSINESS mentors are looking forward to the challenge of working with the winning businesses after finding the standard of this year's competition far higher than last year.

Bob Urwin, who runs the Oxford franchise of lettings agency Martin & Co, said: "I found compiling the shortlist for the final stage of judging very difficult."

"All business owners put forward compelling reasons why they should win the competition. The most surprising revelation was that it was not always financial rewards that drove these entrepreneurs, but how a business could thrive as well as serve a social purpose in the local community."

Mike Jennings, chairman of the family business that runs Jennings business parks in Oxfordshire, added: "The quality of the entrants this year was exceptional and shows clearly that the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation is alive and well in Oxfordshire."



■ **MENTORS:** Bob Urwin, Mike Jennings and Brendon Cross

And Brendon Cross, managing director of Witney-based telecommunications firm STL Communications, said: "The extremely high quality of the finalists goes to show that Oxfordshire is an enterprising county and that these awards are an excellent showcase for entrepreneurial spirit."

Dragon shares her knowledge

ONE overall star business will be put forward to be in with a chance to gain *Dragon's Den* star Deborah Meaden as a mentor during 2013.

Ms Meaden said: "With last year's LBA having demonstrated the unique power of local and regional press to provide a meaningful boost to promising young businesses, I am delighted to be supporting the initiative once again."

"The campaign provided tangible examples of the real contribution that local newspapers can provide to young businesses across many different sectors, accelerating their development."

"Enterprise and entrepreneurship in the local community are more important than ever before and I look forward to another young business to mentor and drive forward."

Anger at fuel report

Verdict on the county's varying prices at the pumps is rubbished

DRIVERS claim a postcode lottery at the pumps is fuelling their anger.

Motorists in Oxfordshire have hit out at the latest report into the fuel industry.

And a county survey found fuel prices varied by up to 13 pence – with petrol on sale for 130.9p per litre in some places, and as much as 143.9 per litre at others.

But the report by the Office of Fair Trading played down the price differences between neighbouring towns, and dismissed claims that independent traders were failing to compete with supermarkets.

Local minicab driver Richard Barlow, 59, said: "In Swindon you can get petrol for £1.27 or £1.28 per litre, so why is it £1.34 in some places in Oxfordshire? It just doesn't make sense."

By Freddie Whittaker

"I don't know how they have come up with these figures. It's crazy that they can say there's nothing in it."

He said he would rather pay much higher car tax than pay duty on petrol. He claimed drivers were hit twice by the taxman.

According to comparison website petrolprices.com, a driver can fill up for an average of 130.9p per litre in Banbury, but motorists stocking up in Bicester have to fork out an average of 134.9p per litre.

Haulage boss Steve Radband also reacted with anger to the report. The 50-year-old said: "It's ludicrous that these people think the pricing structure is fair."

"If you filled up at a supermarket and then later from a service station, I guarantee it would be about six or seven pence difference. How is that fair?"

Mo Krish, a Texaco station manager, said independent outlets were more likely to suffer if a supermarket was selling fuel nearby. Larger outlets could charge less for their fuel as they attract more customers.

He said: "I feel it depends on location. If you have a supermarket nearby, I think it does affect independent petrol stations."

The report confirmed that the OFT had received complaints about discrepancies between neighbouring towns, but said evidence gathered showed "it did not appear that price differences were as great as

those complained of".

It said: "We found that petrol and diesel tended to be cheaper in local areas that have a greater number of local retailers and, in particular, in areas where one or more supermarkets are present."

It went on to say that independent retailers had complained they were unable to compete with supermarket and oil company-owned sites.

It said: "We have engaged extensively with independent dealers and their trade body, the Retail Motor Industry Federation and have given

detailed consideration to the evidence that we have received.

"However, we have not at this stage received sufficient evidence of any practices being used against independent dealers to justify investigating these allegations further."

It also said it had found "limited evidence" of "rocket and feather pricing" – a term used to describe prices rising quickly in response to an increase in the price of crude oil, but falling slowly in response to a decrease.

OFT chief executive Clive

Maxwell said: "We recognise that there has been widespread mistrust in how this market is operating."

"However, our analysis suggests that competition is working well, and price rises at the pump over the past decade or so have largely been down to increases in tax and the cost of crude oil."

"Our call for information has not identified any evidence of anti-competitive behaviour in the fuel market at a national level, where competition appears to be strong."



The forecourt at the Sainsbury's petrol station in Banbury

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From left: Didcot Sainsbury's, Banbury Sainsbury's, The Shell garage in Headington, Oxford, and the price sign at Cherwell Valley Services on the M40

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Children's fun and love songs

Half term looms. But The Mill, has has a captivating set of shows and activities to keep children happy.

The action begins on Monday, February 11 when theatre practitioner and artworker Shona Edwards holds a Mill Fun Day.

"Youngsters can bring along a packed lunch along and spend the day taking part in a range of craft activities and having fun in some of our entertaining theatre games," said Ms Edwards.

"There is a reduction in the price of the session for members of the centre's Youth Arts classes."

On Tuesday the Mill presents the first in a series of theatre shows for younger children.

Oliver Jeffers, the popular, award-winning author of *Catch a Star*, *Lost and Found* and *The Way Back Home*, returns with *Stuck* – the tale of a small boy in a very sticky situation... This is a great show for children from three years upwards.

On Thursday, (February 14), Clydebuilt Puppet Theatre's experts show off their amazing talents in a new presentation of *Rapunzel*.

The audience is welcomed to Dame Gothe's garden where they can let down their own hair with *Rapunzel*. The show, for youngsters from four and up, is narrated by a heroic and wonderful frog.

Later in the month, on Saturday, February 23 at 2pm, Lyngo Theatre brings presents *Snow Play* – a popular production that enjoyed a sell-out run at the Lyric in Hammersmith at Christmas.

Snow Play tells how Mr Green, returns home to find Mr White in his house. It is the start of a brilliant series of adventures as Mr White covers the whole house in snow and

By Liz Nicholls

Mr Green does everything he can to get him outside into the garden!

Children in the audience get stuck in too with their own snow, making a snowman and joining in with a massive snowball fight.

■ **Mill Fun Day, Mon (Feb 11), 10am-4pm £16/£14.**

■ **Big Wooden Horse presents *Stuck*. Tues (Feb 12) 11.30am & 2pm. £6 (£22 family)**

■ **Clydebuilt's *Rapunzel*, Thurs (Feb 14) 2pm. £6 (£22 family)**

■ **Lyngo Theatre presents *Snow Play*. Sat (Feb 23), 2pm. £6 (£22 family)**

Live Arts at St Mary's relaunch the lunchtime community programme once again with a **Valentine's Day Lunchtime Concert.**

Well-known local singers from Banbury Operatic Society and St Mary's Choir will perform love songs from a range of shows accompanied by Wendy Green at the keyboard. Stars from Banbury Operatic Society are taking time out during their show week, performing *Kiss Me Kate* nightly at Wykham Theatre.

The concert will provide a



HEART-MELTING: Snow Play and, left, Jenny Tustian, Fred Riches and Gareth Jeremy get ready for St Mary's Valentine's Day Concert

relaxing hour enjoying numbers such as *Sunrise*, *Sunset*, *I Dreamed a Dream*, *People Will Say We're In Love* - and listening to two young singers from St Mary's Choir – Lucy Donaldson performing *I Could Have Danced All Night* and Anna Hassall performing *Where is Love?*

■ **Valentine's Day Lunchtime Concert, St Mary's Church, Banbury, 1pm. £5 on the door.**



Larry strumming up support

■ **LEGENDARY** guitar slinger Larry Miller brings his mesmerising, rip-roaring show to Banbury's Mill Theatre on Saturday (February 9).

The Larry Miller Band is one of the most popular blues and rock acts in the UK... and Larry holds the distinction of achieving the record for the most encores (seven) – at The Cambridge Rock Festival inspiring the festival organisers to declare it 'national Larry Miller day'!

He returned in 2012 to a standing ovation and the biggest crowd of the festival.

Larry Miller is influenced by some of the guitar greats – Jimi Hendrix, Rory Gallagher, Johnny Winter, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Gary Moore. For me, my moment of inspiration was seeing Rory Gallagher live; I'd never experienced anything like it," he said.

"So loud, so gloriously on the edge of total mayhem, yet Rory was still totally in control. How could I not do this too? Like Rory I'd work under my own name, with a band. I'd do the writing, singing, producing, playing and leading."

A hugely charismatic performer, Larry has been refining his own style ever since. He is a guitarist, singer, songwriter, with a love for his music which is simply infectious and has made him something of a superstar.

He plays Gibson Les Paul, Fender Stratocaster and Telecaster guitars through Marshall amplification.

He has released six albums, all of which have enjoyed critical acclaim. The latest, *Unfinished Business*, has had rave reviews.

The Larry Miller Band, 8.30pm Sat. £12/£14. Call 01295 279002



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GOOD COMPANIONSHIP Happy-go-lucky Devizes female, 41, good sense of humour, looking for a reliable, caring man, for a long term relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136646 or send a text to 80360

SPARKS FLYING Fun, curly, green-eyed Wiltshire brunette, 45, looking for genuine, loving guy, to share some caring times and future happiness. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 852093 or send a text to 80360

FOR HAPPINESS Upbeat Swindon female, 45, 5'4", would like to meet a male, to go on dates, share company and hopefully form a relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 127393 or send a text to 80360

SMOOTH MOVE Slim, blue-eyed Trobridge female, 48, 5'2", GSOH, easy to get on with, enjoys nights out, walks and more, searching for an honest, active, interesting man. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 109958 or send a text to 80360

RATIONAL HERE WAITING Quiet, intelligent and sincere Wiltshire woman, 48, 5'5", would like to meet a man, with a date with an aware, intuitive gent, for happiness, love and laughter. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136967 or send a text to 80360

LOST FOR WORDS Swindon girl, 49, enjoys socialising, skiing, badminton and more, searching for a down to earth man. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 108304

LOVE THE COMPANY Hard-working, fun and very loving Swindon female, 50, 5'2", blonde, medium-build, would like to meet a gentleman, confident and intelligent, for a friendly, fun friendship, company and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137977 or send a text to 80360

START LIVING AGAIN Friendly, fun Oxfordshire divorced mum, 51, 5'7", grown up children, looking for love again and someone to share life with. Is the right man out there for me? Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 798804

SEARCHING FOR YOU Down to earth, Mauritius-born Devizes female, 51, looking for someone for a serious relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 120023 or send a text to 80360

SEE FOR YOURSELF Easygoing Swindon woman, 52, 5'5", own home/car, enjoys walking my dog, socialising and affection, seeks a lasting, loving man, for a warm and tactile relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104009 or send a text to 80360

VA VA VOOM Positive, lovable and kind-hearted woman, 50, #fagge, would like to meet a vivacious, self-assured male, for love and an honest future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 135186

SOMEONE EXACTLY LIKE YOU Caring, lovely, bubbly Bicester lady, 53, looking for a tall, kind, caring 20-something man for a lasting loving relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 118921 or send a text to 80360

RESTORE MY FAITH Family oriented, honest, trustworthy and caring Oxford mum, 53, looking for a genuine sincere guy, with a good sense of humour, to share good times with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 116101

A NEW LIFE Truthful, gracious and protective Wallingford girl, 54, 5'8", looking to find a truthful, sophisticated gent, to share and enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137082

I'LL TREAT YOU RIGHT Sincere Swindon woman, 54, GSOH, fun personality, loves nights out, socialising and music, seeks a friendly bloke, to share lots of good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104377 or send a text to 80360

THAT SPECIAL PERSON Honest, bubbly female, 55, kind, loving, seeks 6ft+ male, for romance, companionship & lots more. Bicester. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 110670

SIMPLE TASTES Open, honest Bampton female, 55, enjoys country walks, gardening, swimming, theatre, travelling, would like to meet that special man, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136810 or send a text to 80360

SHALL WE DANCE? Blonde, blue-eyed Swindon girl, 56, friendly nature, well-travelled and loyal, lover of life, searching for an active, educated man, who appreciates, food, wine and life in general. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 110895

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GIVE ME A CALL SOMETIME Separated, caring Devizes female, 57, genuine, loving, GSOH, likes reading, cooking, meals and cosy nights in, seeking a tall man, for friendship, leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132887 or send a text to 80360

HEADLINE NEWS Sincere, reliable Wiltshire lady, 57, likes dogs, travelling and good conversations, seeking an honest, reliable male, for company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 124692 or send a text to 80360

MEANINGFUL TIMES Active, outgoing Trobridge female, 57, loves cinema, seaside, travelling and animals, would like to meet a man for company leading to a possible relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117215

FIRENDS FIRST Intelligent, attractive Wiltshire female, 57, widow, brunette, 5'2", likes radio 4, reading, travel, art galleries and gym, new to area and seeking a similar guy, GSOH, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 124892 or send a text to 80360

RECIPES FOR LOVE Kind-hearted, sociable Oxford lady, 57, active, caring, GSOH, enjoys rock concerts, seaside, animals and driving, searching for a warm, loving and funny gent, for company, sharing and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 130132 or send a text to 80360

CLOSE TO HAPPINESS Cuddly, young looking 58yr old Salisbury woman, likes travel, reading crime thrillers, all kinds of music, looking for a rugged man to make me smile & share fun times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 119145

LIFE STARTS HERE Bubbly, attractive Witney female, 59, slim build, 5'5", sociable, enjoys nights out, conversation, days away and cosy nights in, seeking a funny and intelligent male, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 134011

SEEKING THE RIGHT MAN Separated, attractive Witney female, 60, 5'2", curvy, likes cooking, evenings in/out and much more, seeks friendly male, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128289 or send a text to 80360

THE LONG TERM Separated, easygoing Oxon female, 60, likes cooking, evenings in/out and much more, seeks friendly male, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100451

LOVE IS FOR SHARING Easygoing, sincere Trobridge lady, 60, med build, 5'6", GSOH, N/S, enjoys good social life, darts, music, walking & reading, searching for that special guy, N/S and caring for dates & more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 116161

OPEN YOUR HEART Slim, attractive Swindon widow, 61, 5'4", enjoys walks, sports, travel, country pubs and socialising, seeking a similar male, to share interests together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 125012 or send a text to 80360

GENUINE AND CARING Oxfordshire widow, 61, 5'6", slender build, sociable, caring and well-travelled, searching for a genuine, professional guy, non-smoker, for friendship, maybe lasting love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 466487

LISTEN TO YOUR HEART Happy go lucky Warmistone female, 62, looking for a nice kind and reliable man to share good times together and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 120544

SOCIALS SORT Tall, blonde Wiltshire girl, 63, enjoys cars, walks, gardening and more, searching for a sociable man, with an active lifestyle, for a loving and lasting relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 452750

FRIENDSHIP, MAYBE MORE... Sociable, active Witney woman, 63, GSOH, widow, attractive, likes meeting people, theatre, drinks, meals out and walking, seeking a similar man, caring and genuine, for friendship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 127066

CHATS OVER A PINT? Country woman looking to meet a loving, dark haired, slim man, I'm 64yrs old, 5'7", slim and fit, love being outdoors, walking and gardening. Marlborough/Wiltshire Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 112241 or send a text to 80360

THE BETTER THINGS IN LIFE Divorced Swindon female, 65, 5'5", works part-time, likes walking, travelling and cooking, would like to meet a nice sociable gent, with a good lifestyle, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 114628

HONEST RELATIONSHIP Non-smoking Bradford lady, 65, 5'5", slim-build, blue-eyes with a positive outlook, enjoy countryside, dancing, music, theatre, seeking a gent, 63-68, to enjoy similar interest. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128404 or send a text to 80360

HAPPIER DAYS Kind-hearted, homely and sensitive Didcot widow, 70, would like a date with a lovable, kind-hearted guy, for friendship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136207 or send a text to 80360

ADVENTURE AHEAD Warm, friendly Witney woman, 71, GSOH, youthful, attractive, likes dancing, walking, music, theatre, reading and more, looking to meet a tall, active and fun gentleman, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 123234

COZY TIMES TOGETHER Down-to-earth, widow Trobridge lady, 80, loves animals, outings, would like to meet a warm-hearted gent, to end life with. Could previous caller please call again. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 133321



FRIENDSHIP & ROMANCE Genuine, active Oxford male, 28, slim build, 5'7", caring, enjoys the gym, cycling and generally keeping fit, would like to meet a similar female, honest, GSOH and fun, for friendship and love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 122941

WE COULD BE GOOD TOGETHER Down to earth Swindon male, 37, enjoys cycling, walks, travel and lots more, seeks laid back female, for good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100773

PERFECT HARMONY Fun-loving, easygoing, tactile Witney biker, 41, 6ft, stocky build, shaven head and goatee, seeks fun loving, cheeky lady to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 108035 or send a text to 80360

READY TO MEET MY SOULMATE Outgoing, sociable Oxford male, 41, black, GSOH, caring, enjoys living life to the full and would like to share life with a bubbly, attractive and kind female, for a loving relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 127095

TAKE HANDS Slim, tall Oxfordshire male, 43, N/S, musician and artist, searching for his perfect woman, to make life complete. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 108016

IN OTHERS OTHERS COMPANY Divorced, hard-working Corsham male, 43, likes keeping fit, long walks, cycling, swimming, seeking a female, for fun, friendship and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137979 or send a text to 80360

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CAUGHT YOU LOOKING! Sociable Scotman, 43, 5'4", blue-eyes, works full-time, likes most things in life, social drinks, bowling, socialising, would like to meet a nice woman to share good times with. Swindon. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 119463 or send a text to 80360

ENJOY GOOD COMPANY Honest male, 44, 6'3", stocky build, gosh, enjoys sports, travel, cosy times in, social drinks, seeks fun loving female, for happier times. Oxford. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101716 or send a text to 80360

SHARE THE MOMENT Friendly, lovely and sincere Oxford gent, 44, 5'10", wants to meet a homely, sensible woman, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 134382 or send a text to 80360

COME CLOSER Active, kind-hearted and upbeat Oxford bloke, 46, looking to find an insightful, liberal woman, for fun and maybe a little romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 130080

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL Kind, easygoing, down-to-earth Thame male, 46, enjoys music, country walks, cooking, reading, films, seeking a kind, sincere, slim female, 25+. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137427 or send a text to 80360

LOOKING FOR HAPPINESS Kind, loving Swindon man, 46, physically fit and active, enjoys films, swimming and good company, looking for someone similar to enjoy a trusting relationship with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 118373

UP AND UP Fun-loving Oxford male, 50, likes listening to music, watching movies, walks and nights out, looking for a nice female friend, for good times and maybe romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 875263

GET TO THE GOOD TIMES Separated, laid-back Bicester guy, 50, 5'10", brown hair/blue eyes, decent build, self-employed, looking for an attractive woman. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136282 or send a text to 80360

LOVE TO HAVE A LAUGH Friendly, warm hearted Abingdon male, 50, good sense of humour, would like to meet a caring, matured guy, to enjoy good times together, for a long term relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 115894

ACCEPT EACH OTHER Easygoing Wantage male, 51, own car, works full-time, likes most sports, would like to meet an outgoing female, for good times leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 135164 or send a text to 80360

TIME FOR A CHANGE Friendly, expressive and vibrant Kidlington male, 51, would like to meet a life-loving, interesting lady, to share the future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 114479

ETERNAL COMPANIONSHIP Outgoing, divorced Witney male, 52, pubs, meals, nice walks, family life, seeking an interesting lady, to get to know better. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 126741 or send a text to 80360

ALL TO LOVE Kind and caring Oxfordshire male, 52, brown hair, green eyes, GSOH, searching for a nice, genuine girl, for friendship first, then maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 461278

NOT TO BE MISSED Spontaneous, caring, hard-working Oxford guy, 54, likes music, cooking, live bands, good wine and F1, would like to meet a simple woman, to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 115773 or send a text to 80360

PERFECT COMPANY Practical, original and loyal Oxford based man, 54, 5'10", divorced, into sport, history and much more, would like to find a pensionable, kind-hearted female, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137091 or send a text to 80360

LET'S DO IT Upbeat, friendly man, 54, good sense of humour, into most things, travelling, good foods, looking for love and romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 110840

TAKE CHARGE Bright, humorous and optimistic Banbury man, 55, would like a date with a chatty, active woman, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132836 or send a text to 80360

A FUTURE FILLED WITH LAUGHTER Divorced, young at heart male, 56, own house in Oxford, likes cinema, theatre and clubs, seeks caring female for happy times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 107632

CARING NATURE Dependable, informed and responsible Witney man, 58, 6'3", looking for a helpful, decent woman, to share a brighter future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 111595

SHARING GOOD TIMES Upbeat Burford widower, 58, own cars, works full time, likes days in and out, countryside walks, driving, looking for a similar woman for companionship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117916 or send a text to 80360

STILL SEARCHING FOR YOU Youthful, solvent, active, retired businessman, 66, 5'9", 1st, own house & car, loves music, places of interest, experiencing the new, seeks a loving, feminine woman, 50-70, to share a warmth. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132140

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PASSION FLOWER Young-looking Oxford 59yr old chap, 5'9", dark hair, enjoys cinema, bowling, days out and socialising, seeks loving, loyal female, for lasting relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101122 or send a text to 80360

LONG LASTING HAPPINESS Fairly fit Banbury man, 60, 5'11", fair-hair, blue-eyes, works as electrician, looking for a nice lady around the same age, for friendship possibly leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 122384

CONFIDENTLY YOURS Widowed chap, 60, 5'10", own home/business, Witney based, enjoys music, country walks, pubs, fishing, gardening, seeks outgoing female, to enjoy life again. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 107964

POSITIVE ATTITUDE Fit Latino male, 61, looking for someone who can share fun, life in general and hopefully love with. Oxford. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 160522

PASS THIS WAY Well-built Devizes widower, 61, 6ft, own country cottage, own business, enjoys reading and gardening, seeking a nice lady, 40-55, for a happy relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100861 or send a text to 80360

SO GOOD TOGETHER Genuine, easygoing, happy Abingdon male, 62, own home/car, enjoys dancing, days out and walking the dog, searching for a genuine lady, with an attractive and happy nature. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 466085

READY TO MOVE On Young, caring Didcot guy, 63, 5'9", enjoys the sea, reading and boating, would like to meet a similar lady for companionship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117043

MORE IN TIME Self-employed Witney male, 64, loves cinema, theatre, eating out and more, searching for a serious-minded lady, for a loving and supportive relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 109413 or send a text to 80360

MAKE A FRIEND Warm, romantic Bicester male, 65, searching for an interesting, active woman, for days out, friendship, meals and good company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 851123

AN IDEAL PARTNER Caring, loyal, romantic, retired Kenner chap, 65, dog love, keen golfer, eating out and cosy times in, seeking a nice lady, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136451

STILL SEARCHING FOR YOU Youthful, solvent, active, retired businessman, 66, 5'9", 1st, own house & car, loves music, places of interest, experiencing the new, seeks a loving, feminine woman, 50-70, to share a warmth. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132140

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KINDRED SPIRITS Presentable, educated chap, 66, enjoys the arts, history, places of interest, exploring towns/countryside on foot, wlm attractive, vivacious lady, for romance. Oxford. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101058

LOVING LIFE Loyal, solvent North Oxfordshire male, 66, 5'9", loves soul and motown music, coffee and theatre, searching for an attractive, interesting lady, 50-65, to share and explore interesting times. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104998

A FRIEND INDEED Semi-retired Oxford male, 66, 6', slim-build, likes playing bowls, home life, seeking an easygoing female, for good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137812 or send a text to 80360

LET'S SHARE THE GOOD THINGS Well preserved male, 67, 5'10", adequate intelligence, passably handsome, active, inquisitive, liberal outlook, loving bright, youthful lady for wlm relationship and interesting times. Witney Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 108871

JUST AN ORDINARY GUY Friendly, faithful Didcot male, 67, 5'9", likes rugby, football, DIY, gardening and much more, searching for a loving woman, to make life complete. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 456285

RARE DISCOVERY Easygoing Thame widower, 67, 6', medium-build, likes gardening, playing golf, the outdoors, would like to meet a nice lady, for a lasting relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 134196

OF A GENUINE DESCRIPTION Fit, clean-shaven Thame gentleman, 67, easygoing, 6ft, active, enjoys gardening, golf, diy and the outdoors, seeking a similar lady, affectionate and fun, for friendship and hopefully love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 126173

SOUL TO SOUL Divorced, active Oxfordshire male, 78, 5'5", looks younger, N/S, enjoys pubs, meals, boot sales, crosswords and cosy times, seeking a charming lady, to share quality times and romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100937



HOPE THIS WORKS Cuddly Swindon lady, 47, easygoing and fun to be with, looking for friendship leading to more with a nice, friendly, bubbly woman. Where are you? Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 851817

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER Swindon lady, 49, looking for straight female friends. Into things like cycling, pilates, yoga, dancing, meals, drinks out, theatre, shopping, trips, girly chats the usual sorts of things. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128139

A stiff drink and buckle up for a bumpy ride

FLIGHT (15, 138 mins)

Drama/Romance/Action. Denzel Washington, Kelly Reilly, John Goodman, Don Cheadle, Brian Geraghty, Tamara Tunie, Bruce Greenwood, Melissa Leo, Nadine Velazquez. Director: Robert Zemeckis.

Denzel Washington soars to career highs in Robert Zemeckis's emotionally wrought character study of an airplane pilot wrestling with alcohol dependency.

Underpinned by John Gatins's intelligent script, *Flight* is a provocative drama that refuses to cast judgment on the central character as he repeats past mistakes and attempts to dodge the repercussions of his reckless actions.

Instead, Zemeckis's film accompanies the pilot on a turbulent journey of self-discovery as a major mechanical failure in the air puts his boozy lifestyle under the microscope of public scrutiny.

Captain William "Whip" Whitaker (Washington) wakes in a plush hotel room festooned with discarded bottles and the naked body of last night's conquest, flight attendant Katerina Marquez (Nadine Velazquez).

Swigs of beer set Whip up for the day and he strides purposefully into the cockpit of his Southjet flight to Atlanta, while holding a bottle of orange juice spiked with vodka.

Katerina is on board, serving passengers alongside experienced colleague Margaret Thomason (Tamara Tunie).

A routine flight becomes a nightmare when the airplane suddenly loses altitude and hurtles towards the ground at terrifying speed.

Whip is forced to perform a daredevil manoeuvre to halt the rapid descent before crash-landing in a field.

A subsequent investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board, led by Ellen Block (Melissa Leo), threatens to expose Whip's alcoholism.

Union rep Charlie Anderson (Bruce Greenwood) and attorney Hugh Lang (Don Cheadle) promise to help Whip survive the fallout, on the proviso that he changes his self-destructive ways.

Whip agrees to exorcise his demons, supported by a recovering heroine addict called Nicole (Kelly Reilly).

Romance blossoms but while Nicole continues to get her life back in order, Whip struggles to resist his desires, turning to drug dealer Harling Mays (John Goodman) to take the edge off his anxiety.

Flight boasts a jaw-dropping centrepiece crash sequence that spins an entire airplane through 360 degrees.

Zemeckis orchestrates these intense scenes with bravado but he is equally interested in quieter moments when Whip wrestles with his guilt and attempts to resist the temptations of a hotel mini-bar.

Washington is riveting as a man in authority who can barely function without liquor.

He lays bare Whip's insecurities



Denzel Washington in a scene from the film *Flight*

and doesn't resort once to currying our sympathy.

Reilly impresses in a pivotal supporting role and Goodman injects humour as the supplier who knows the perfect cocktail of narcotics to counteract a hangover.

Climactic scenes are gripping and we buckle up for a bumpy ride as Whip prepares to deliver sworn testimony at the public hearing, potentially glossing over the facts to restore a sheen to his stained reputation.

CakeWhat's on

Music

SATURDAY: The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton: Not The Rolling Stones. Tribute band. £15, concession £13. 7.45pm. 01608 642350

Theatre

The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park, Banbury:

Feb 8, *Matt Parker Is the Number Ninja*. Direct from BBC Radio 4's *Infinite Monkey Cage* with Robin Ince and Brian Cox, with maths research featured on QI, stand-up mathematician Matt Parker takes a hilarious tour through the world of numbers. 8pm. £12, concession £10.

Feb 9, The Larry Miller Band.

Feb 12, *Stuck*, by Oliver Jeffers. A tale about a little boy in a very sticky situation. Floyd gets his kite stuck in a tree. He throws up his shoe to shift it, but that gets stuck, so he throws up his other shoe and that gets stuck too. Along with the cat, a ladder, a pot of paint,

the kitchen sink, an orang-utan and a whale, amongst other things! Will Floyd ever get his kite back? 11.30am, 2pm. £6 (family £22).

Box office: 01295 279002
Wyckham Theatre, Banbury Academy, Ruskin Road, Banbury: Feb 12-16, *Kiss Me Kate*. Audiences are in for a treat when Banbury Operatic Society stages this glittering and exuberant show-within-a-show, which really does have it all - gun-toting gangsters, sparring actors, lovers, gamblers and romantic entanglements. Music and lyrics are by Cole Porter Tue £10, Wed-Sat £12. Book tickets at the society's website or buy in person at Anker & Partner Estate Agents, High Street, Banbury. 7.30pm.
The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton: Feb 7-8, *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*. A new play partly developed in Chipping Norton, with live music. Inspired by the cult silent film of the same name.

Presented by Simple8, an associate company of the Theatre. £13, concession £11. 7.45pm. Post-show discussion Fri. Feb 9, *How To Catch A Star*. Children's theatre company Blunderbus presents this retelling of Oliver Jeffers's bewitching story. A blend of music, puppetry and storytelling. £8.50. 11am and 2.30pm.

Feb 11, Play screening of National Theatre production - *The Magistrate*. Academy Award nominee and Tony Award-winner John Lithgow (*Shrek, Third Rock from the Sun*) takes the title role in Victorian farce. 7pm. £15.
Feb 13, *My Big Little Sister*. A delightful new play taking a light-hearted look at the pressure of consumerism on young minds and learning what happiness really means, from the ever-popular company behind *Great Gran's Great Games* and *Laura's Star*. 11.30am and 2.30pm.
Box office: 01608 642350

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ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

The Sun is bringing out your needy side and you may find yourself asking for commitments you neither want nor need. Think before you speak my friend, your future is at stake. Children and younger faces in general come to the fore and you may find yourself having to guide them through a problem of some sort. Call now to hear how foreign countries may soon beckon to you.

0906 585 4360

LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

Faces you haven't seen since last Christmas come to mind, or in some cases even come back into your life again. Some pretty major influences have seen change in others' lives and you're about to find out how they're going to influence yours too Libra. Knowing who you are and what you want can get you ahead of the game. Phone me now to reveal a secret admirer you've earned.

0906 585 4366

TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

The wonderful thing about you Taurus, is that when you're in the mood, you can convince anyone of anything. The big question is do you really want to tell a close one a lie which may be revealed a few months or even years down the line? I don't think so, for you'll only end up tearing down all you've built up. Honesty midweek can work miracles. Call now so I can tell you more.

0906 585 4361

SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

Friends don't seem to be as honest with you as they were and this has much to do with the vibes you've been giving out since January. It's time to come clean and tell them what you're really up to. Several close ones have already guessed your secret. Financial setbacks can be avoided if you are more honest about your outgoings. Ring me now to hear what help Saturn can offer to you.

0906 585 4367

GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

You have a lot of work to do but you also have some personal issues you want to deal with. Which should take precedence? There will be room for both if you can organise your time well this week. Careful of a jealous ex trying to spread rumours. To react to what they've said will only add fuel to the fire. Give me a call now to hear whose forced change can allow you to make a change yourself.

0906 585 4362

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

Your need to have things done your way can often cause a problem for your close ones who at least want the chance to tell you their view of things. A new face has an offer of love for you but do they really know the real you? Jupiter helps you to sort out a professional or legal matter before Friday. Give me a call now to find out why you're destined to be spoilt for choice this year.

0906 585 4368

CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

Places of health or fitness come to the fore and you may have to sacrifice your time in order to take care of something which you did not expect. The stars are behind you for a really successful week. All you have to do is keep your eyes peeled and your ears to the ground. What is happening this week can be the beginning of positive change in your life. Phone now to reveal your future.

0906 585 4363

CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

New beginnings may be scary but they can also be a good thing, especially if you keep an open mind and heart. Listening to others' opinions and thoughts on life on Thursday and Friday can show you an alternative way of dealing with something which has been a thorn in your side for the last fortnight. Give me a call now to hear who has your secret you need to get to the bottom of.

0906 585 4369

LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

There is no point in speaking untruths just for the sake of it. You may think that you're acting out a fine performance but other signs in the zodiac would beg to differ. Try to keep your nose clean in business this week. It's the only way you will ensure that offers you receive are permanent and not just temporary ones. Phone now to hear when you hold the line art of seduction.

0906 585 4364

AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

I know you feel as if life hasn't given you much of a break lately but you haven't exactly been honest with those around you, have you? Trust me, this is one situation where you can only feel relief from telling the truth. It's been eating away at you and affecting your health so what possible good can it do to continue in this way. Ring me now to hear which your power days.

0906 585 4370

VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

Plans may not go as expected but instead you will see a wealth of opportunity. Anything is possible if you can have confidence in who you are and what you want. Finally you get the chance to shape your life. Call now for the week in detail.

0906 585 4365

PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

Don't allow yourself to be bullied into something which suits someone but does not fit in with you. You don't have to scream and shout even if they want to. Keeping your cool on Thursday can see you coming out the more mature one in this drama. New flirtations come at a price. Check what it is before you proceed with it. Ring now to hear which sign would be your match made in heaven.

0906 585 4371

CakeSport

banburycake.co.uk/sport

'Rising star' signed



Sam Tordoff and Jason Plato with the MG BTCC car at Longbridge the home of MG Motors

Tordoff completes BTCC team's line-up

YOUNG racing driver Sam Tordoff has joined Greatworth's MG KX Momentum Racing team – and has already achieved one of his lifelong ambitions.

Tordoff, 23, has been racing since he was ten years old and is acclaimed as Britain's brightest racing talent.

Last year, he was officially recognised as the British Racing Drivers' Club 'Rising Star'.

He joins Oxfordshire's Jason Plato, the most successful driver in BTCC history, to contest the 2013 Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship.

They will both be driving racing versions of the MG6 GT, prepared by Triple 888 Race Engineering, of Greatworth.

Ian Harrison, who has the task of managing the MG KX Momentum team, said: "We've got a great team for the 2013 season in Jason and Sam."

"Jason's obviously got the experience, including a fabulous year with the MG6 GT last year, and Sam's out to prove himself now he's won a seat in a top team. It's going to be a great year of racing."

Last year, Plato was third in the championship in what was supposed to be the team's "learning year" as MG returned to the track.

Tordoff began racing karts as a boy and worked his way up the motorsport ladder via the Renault Clio Cup and the Porsche Carrera Cup with many wins and podiums under his belt. He also competed in one round of BTCC racing in 2010 on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit.

Last year Tordoff, who has a B.Eng in mechanical engineering and works as a trainee accountant with the JCT600 motor group, won a place at the KX Akademy for the 2013 season. The bursary programme was set up by KX Energy Drink, where Plato is the scheme's mentor.

He said: "I'm thrilled to be joining Jason, Ian and the rest of the team and I'm determined to do well – even if it means beating Jason!"

Plato said: "Sam's a great young talent and brings a lot to our team. He's a fast learner and it will be great to see him alongside me on the podium – but I'm planning to be on the top step."

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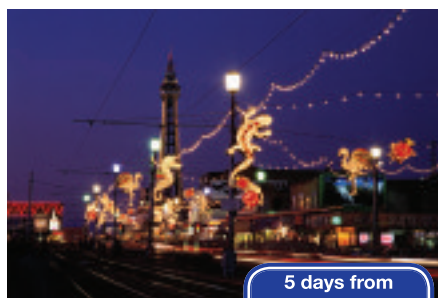
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By Gill Oliver

floor. There are five bedrooms and four bathrooms.

Landscaped grounds include a walled courtyard garden, patio and garage.

It also comes with a two-bedroom cottage, which agents say would be ideal to house extended family, guests or domestic staff.

A one-acre field may also be available through separate negotiation.

Another property in a majestic setting is Mount Pleasant Farm house in Middle Claydon.

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The two-bedroom annex has its own kitchen, bathroom and living room.

The property comes with a private garden that backs on to open fields.

● Both properties are available, unfurnished, from letting agents Finders Keepers at £2,500 pcm.

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Nissan crosses into super sales success

By David Duffy

WHAT do you need for the perfect family car? Space, obviously, for both passengers and luggage and plenty of cubby holes. And it needs to be tough, yet comfortable, with an economical engine for long-distance travel.

So far, just about every hatchback ever built will fulfil those requirements.

The genius of Nissan's family of crossover vehicles is to blend the best qualities of a versatile hatch with the high-riding practicality of a sports utility vehicle.

The formula has proved spectacularly successful with the Sunderland-built Qashqai, pronounced 'Cash Kai', selling more than a million since its launch in 2007, making it Nissan's most successful car so far. That is no surprise, as the car that was conceived, designed and developed in Europe, rides quietly and comfortably and handles with surprising agility.

It also has the reassuring option of an electronic 4x4 system that can automatically compensate for unexpectedly slippery conditions, such as early morning winter ice, wet leaves in autumn, or loose gravel. The Tekna test car sits at the top of the four trim levels on offer and comes with a wide range of

technology, some of it more useful than others. A handy feature is the 'intelligent key' which allows you to lock or unlock the car and start the engine without the key ever having to leave your pocket.

Xenon headlamps light the way, a Bose speaker system is standard and the touchscreen colour satellite navigation system is clear and simple to operate, offering fastest or shortest route, and an 'Eco' option which selects a route aimed at delivering top fuel economy. The system will also warn of congestion ahead and calculate an alternative route. Nissan is proud of its so-called 'Around View Monitor' which uses four cameras linked to the satnav display screen to give a 360-degree view around the car when manoeuvring and parking. It sounds great, and looks impressive in action, but in practice I find that concentrating on images on a



SALES SUCCESS: The Qashqai, built in Sunderland, is Nissan's best-selling car

dashboard-mounted screen, rather than looking around yourself, can be distracting. Give me a set of audible parking sensors and possibly a display that warns precisely how close you are to an obstacle any day.

Safety is clearly a top priority on any family car and all Qashqai models come with anti-lock brakes and an electronic stability program, as well as an array of front, side and curtain airbags.

So the perfect family car then? Well probably not with test car's glamorous, but stain-attracting, light-grey leather trim.

Auto facts

Model: Nissan Qashqai 1.6 dCi Tekna
Price: £26,045
Insurance group: 14 (1-50)
Fuel consumption: (Combined): 55.4mpg
Top speed: 118mph
Length: 433cm/170.5in
Width: 178cm/70in
Luggage capacity: 14.5 cu ft
Fuel tank capacity: 14.3 gallons/65 litres
CO2 emissions: 135g/km
Warranty: Three years/ 60,000 miles

Newcarscene

'Huge potential' for new car market

THE latest new car sales figures proved better than many had predicted.

A total of 2,036,101 new cars were registered in 2012 compared to 1,930,513 the previous year. That represents an increase of 5.3 per cent, against difficult economic conditions and a relatively gloomy outlook throughout the year.

Not only that, but the market's performance last year was the best since the full effect of the global recession took hold in 2008.

Paul Everitt, chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), said: "Boosted by strong consumer demand, the

market grew at its fastest rate for 11 years, with innovative, fuel-efficient cars keeping buyers in showrooms."

"Looking ahead to 2013, we anticipate the market will hold firm, with manufacturers and dealers working hard to deliver quality and value to motorists." Looking more closely at the detail suggests this was no fluke or anomaly caused by special deals.

Registrations were up in 11 out of 12 months, and the 5.3 per cent growth is the largest increase since 2001, and only the second rise since the recession.

Arguably the best news is that the largest proportion of the

growth came from private sales rather than fleet sales; a 12.9 per cent rise in private registrations – equivalent to 106,000 cars – suggests that consumer confidence is higher than even the SMMT's own predictions.

But there's no sales without decent product, and due credit has to be given to the manufacturers who are clearly meeting the needs of the customers with strong product offerings, attractive deals and cost-effective aftersales care.

This year, therefore, has huge potential, especially as the number of cars that are built increased last year and could well increase again.

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■ NISSAN has created a new edition of the best-selling Qashqai crossover. The 360 replaces the mid-range n-tec+ trim level and offers more equipment for the same sub-£20,000 starting list price. Although the name suggests that the 360-degree parking camera system called Around View Monitor is new, it was already fitted to the n-tec+. The 360 improves on the kit list with part-leather trim and double white stitching, a gloss black gearlever surround, gloss black door handles and a leather armrest. The 360 is on sale, starting at £19,945 for the 1.6 petrol with a manual gearbox.

■ PEUGEOT'S new 2008 supermini crossover is aiming to stay ahead of the market with a car the length of a supermini, but almost the height of a compact SUV. It will be 4.16m long; about 20cm longer than the 208. Few real details have been released, but the engine choices will include at least one sub-100g/km option for road tax-free motoring. The 2008 will make its debut at the Geneva Motor Show in March, before order books open in June.

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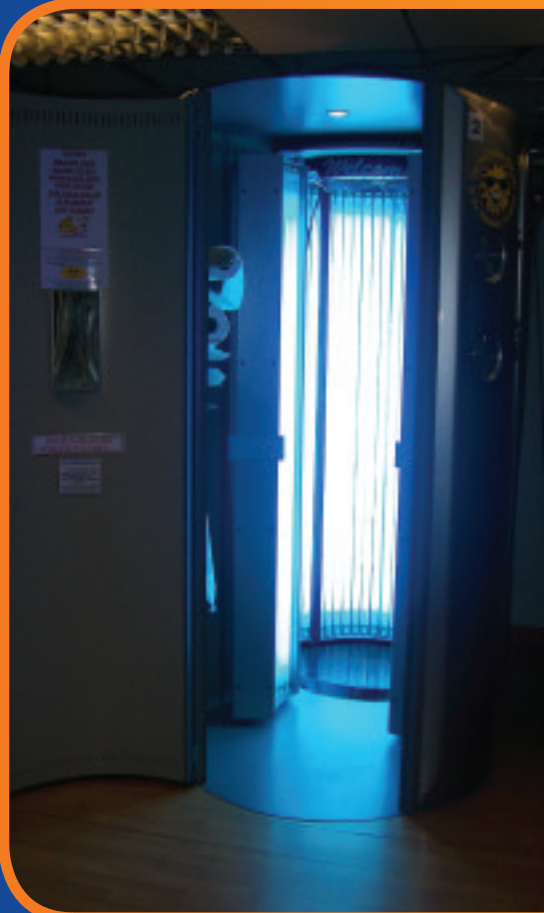
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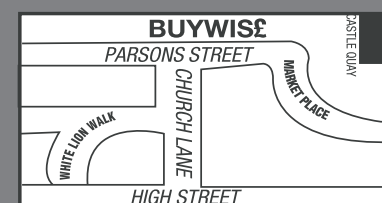
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